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INFORMATION

FOR

ARMY MEETINGS.

In many places the fourth Sabbath evening of the month is devoted to a Union Monthly Concert of Prayer for the Army and Navy. The deepest interest has been excited by these meetings. It is humbly suggested to all who believe in the power of prayer, to form such meetings during the crisis of our nation's destiny. This tract is compiled with the view of affording information for these Army Meetings. Please circulate it.

DECEMBER, 1864.



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INFORMATION

FOR

DECEMBER MEETINGS.

The Gulf Department.

THIS department and the whole line of seaboard from New York to Fort Vancouver, a range of 21,856 miles, with all our ships of war and foreign stations, is under the care of the New York Branch. The difficulty of extending the work of the Christian Commission along such an extent of territory, in such an unhealthy climate as the Gulf Coast, and with irregular means of transportation, could only have been surmounted by the energy, skill, and perseverance of the gentlemen who have taken it in charge. Holding the highest positions, civic, commercial, social, and literary, they have relinquished lucrative and honorable positions to endure the dangers of the sea and the hardships of the field, brave the miasma and yellow fever, and fag at the less romantic but no less necessary drudgery of the office, to the year's end.

The work of the New York Branch during the year 1863 was chiefly in the supply of preaching and reading. A gentleman of leisure and high literary and religious attainments, devoted himself to the work of selecting and compiling soldiers' reading-matter; and it is believed

that the books and tracts furnished to the libraries and reading-rooms of the hospitals and ships of war by the New York Committee cannot be excelled. Tons of magazines and of the metropolitan papers are continually in process of shipment; and correspondence with chaplains, surgeons, and commanders is daily increasing the demand.

The Christly department, of relief for suffering humanity has, during the present year, assumed increasing proportions. The prevention of disease, by the circulation of tens of thousands of Manuals of Soldier's Health, and the distribution of hogsheads of Blackberry Syrup, has been of even greater benefit to our soldiers than the tons of fruit and the cases of clothing distributed to the sick and wounded, and the exchanged prisoners. The outlay of the New York Committee is increasing accordingly, and we doubt not that the princely generosity of the Great Metropolis will be fully adequate to all proper demands for the relief of our brave defenders.

The Brooklyn Branch is an independent organization, and is forwarding delegates, publications, and hospital stores, at a rate worthy of the third city of the Union.

The following letters to Hon. J. V. C. Smith, the Field Agent of the New York Branch, illustrate the work of its delegates..

MORGANZIA, October 26, 1864.

Hon. J. V. C. Smith:

DEAR SIR—The three barrels of reading and hospital stores you last sent, came in good time and order. I have now a supply for some days to come. The men

are busy scouting, preparing for winter quarters—with rumors of changes. The sanitary supplies* go well. The tent is doing good service. Besides affording facilities for distribution, it is used for a Bible-class on Sabbath morning, preaching in the evening, and prayer-meeting each evening in the week—all of which are well attended. I have often wished you could be present in our meetings, and mark the spirit of devotion and good sense manifested. The meeting last evening was of great sweetness and power. One testified that he found the grace of God at Morganzia; another had been an ignorant Roman Catholic, but was brought marvellously to the experience of the gospel. I design to write, some day, on "Religion in the Army," as it has fallen under my own observation.

Rev. Mr. Watson spent two weeks with me; and by his ability and readiness to work, made a decidedly favorable impression, and left, much to the regret of all. I doubt not he will do excellent service at Baton Rouge. I hear also good reports from Rev. Mr. Whittier. Such men are an acquisition to the Commission. Unless we have great military changes, I shall need about the usual supply. I have the commencement of a good Circulating Library: please send me all the books you can spare, without doing injustice to others. There are German books in your reading-room; please send some of them. I do not get an adequate supply of German reading. Some regiments are largely composed of Germans—great readers.

The colored soldiers are anxious to learn, and must

* The fruits, syrups, &c., sent by the Christian Commission.

have books adapted to their capacity. Writing material is in great demand. I would respectfully recommend, if you have none on hand, to buy some. It is hard for a soldier, who has not been paid for six months, not to be able to write his mother a letter, for want of a sheet of paper and envelopes. Many such are here.

In a word, hardly anything comes amiss, in an army like this.

Grateful for the promptness with which you have always sent supplies, I have the honor to be

Your obedient servant,

H. C. DUNHAM.

NEW ORLEANS, Oct. 31, 1864.

Dr. J. V. C. Smith, Agent,
U. S. Christian Commission:

SIR—I have the honor to report my work for the months of September and October, as follows: During September the Sabbath services were kept up at the Military Prison, Naval Hospital, Wood's Press, and Soldier's Home, with occasional services on shipboard and at camps. Packages of reading were distributed at other prisons and depot of troops. Sixteen public religious services were held. The Prisoners' Commission has occupied a large part of my time. Many cases of interest come before us. Letters enclosed indicate the kind of work done.

The interest at the Soldier's Home and in our Reading-room has decreased, because of the small force of troops here, and greater strictness in keeping them in quarters. Only eighty-three visitors to the rooms are recorded; but quite a number of calls for books—thirty taken out.

I have received ninety letters, and written twenty-seven. During the month of October I was enabled to devote more time to the distribution of reading matter, as the Prisoners' Commission closed its labors, and turned over its business to the Provost Marshal General, on the 15th. The same Sabbath various labors were performed, the camps were supplied, and considerable time occupied in attending to business of the Depository.

Revival.

In several camps, religious meetings have been held. The Second Connecticut Battery is enjoying quite a revival. Several soldiers have recently professed conversion, at the Baptist church. A number of young soldiers have started there for heaven; and the prayer-meetings are growing in interest.

Another lot of our exchanged prisoners came in a few days ago from Tyler, Texas. It was pleasant to go among them, and give papers, Testaments, letter-paper, &c. Many of them were enfeebled by confinement and poor fare, and all were happy in being again under the old flag.

The Buried Flag.

This reminds me of a flag I saw in their camp. It was captured with them, but concealed by burial in the earth, and brought away in the lining of an officer's coat. This piece of bunting is highly valued by the brave men of the Forty-eighth Ohio.

Intercession.

During the month I was able to do some kindness at one time to the soldiers in jail, most of whom had, for a

disturbance, been shut up for ten days and nights within their cells. The trouble was caused by their being kept, on two occasions, for nearly twenty-four hours, without food. The Provost Marshal granted my request for their release from close confinement. At another time, on my representations, the Provost Marshal General released from close confinement some sixty prisoners, allowing them the air and light needful for health, and consistent with safety. I was also granted the pardon of several poor fellows, who appeared worthy of clemency—one a boy, sentenced to ten years' imprisonment, and who was so ill as not to be expected to live as many days, when released.

Welcome Always.

I have given out 69 packages of reading, being 7533 publications—of which number there were 205 Hymns, 186 Testaments, and 8 Bibles. My labors in the Prison, the Hospital, the Home, and camps, are full of encouragement. They are well received always; and in the course of a month, because of the shifting of troops, and changing of the men in prison and hospitals, many thousands are addressed—often for the first or last time—and supplied with something good to read. There is every reason to believe that God's rich blessing attends this work.

October.—Fifty-five visitors to Reading-room; twenty books taken; six names to Temperance pledge.

Very respectfully,

R. K. DIOSY, *Delegate.*

Army of the Shenandoah.

The Happiest Hours of Life.

This work, of meeting trains and succoring wounded at Martinsburg; we have found hard for the body, being obliged, as we often have been, to continue it far into the night. At the same time we can truly say, it is a blessed work, truly Christ-like. And you often find where least you expect it, that you have been ministering to Christ in the person of his humble followers. "Is the Heavenly Friend near you to support and comfort you?" I asked a poor suffering man, who had just been brought into the church, with his leg amputated, and laid upon a hard bed of straw. "O, yes," said he, "he is with me, he is precious to me. He has been for many years, but never has he seemed so precious and so near as since I was wounded. All day and all night I lay upon the field, after I was struck and my leg fractured, but, strange as it may seem, they were the happiest hours of my life, made so by the Saviour's presence." "What shall I write to your family?" "Tell my dear wife, I am happy, I am just where I would be, because I am just where God, in his providence, has brought me. I am willing to die or live, just as will best promote his glory." He was soon called to glorify God in his death.

No Humbug.

We have not only had repeated opportunities of witnessing such triumphs of the power of faith and grace, but we have also witnessed the power of Christian kindness upon strong, hard men, and even upon Rebels. As we have ministered to their temporal wants, and ad-

dressed to them words of kindness, we have often seen tears start from eyes unaccustomed to weep, and have received the hearty "God bless you," "God bless the Christian Commission." "This is what I call living Christianity." "This is the religion for me." "I can't stand this," said a rough, hard-looking soldier, who was badly wounded in the foot, but able to hobble along on crutches, "I can't stand this, boys, it overcomes me, I give in," and, as he spoke and hobbled toward us, his whole frame shook with inward emotion, and the big tears fell from his sunburnt face, which he struggled in vain to keep back and hide from his comrades, "you know," he continued, "I am no coward, I can face the enemy, and not wink, but this kindness kills me, it breaks me all to pieces. I have heard all about these men, delegates of the Christian Commission; my wife has written me about them, and the society which sends them forth, and the work they do, and do it all for nothing, and find themselves. I tell you, boys, this is no humbug. It is a big thing. It is the gospel for body and soul, just what we all need;" and so he went on with a truly eloquent speech, of some minutes, and closed by wishing a thousand blessings upon us and the Christian Commission.

P. B. THAYER, *Garland, Me.*

The Revival.

CAMP PAROLE, ANNAPOLIS, Md.

October 20, 1864.

G. S. Griffith, Esq., Chairman Maryland Com. Christ'n Com'n.

DEAR BROTHER—The good work of God has not yet ceased, though about one hundred and fifty, if not nearly

two hundred persons have been converted and recovered from backsliding—thirty-five of them having been baptized, nearly one-half of them by immersion—one hundred and sixty-five have joined our Soldiers' Christian Association since September 6th, and Christians, converts, and reclaimed, have for the most part grown wonderfully in grace, holy joy, and usefulness. The latter, according to David in Psalm li. 12th and 13th, "Return unto me the joy of thy salvation, and uphold me with thy free spirit; then will I teach transgressors thy way, and sinners shall be converted unto thee."

O how these Christian soldiers have prayed and wrought for Christ; I hardly ever witnessed more fervent, effectual prayers—they availed much with God. It would sometimes seem almost as if heaven would be taken by violence. Some of them have been very faithful in personal effort with sinners and backsliders, and oh, how many of the latter there are in the army. Older Christians and young converts have been successful in bringing out the impenitent and wandering to our evening meetings. It would do your heart good now, more than when you and Dr. Schaff, of New York, were here the 6th inst., to hear the Christians reclaimed and converts pray and talk in our meetings.

A growth in grace, holy joy and power with God is manifest to all those who have been there for weeks. The remark was made the other day that converts and recovered sinners were scarcely ever known to have stood better and to have ripened in experience more rapidly and extensively than those of this soldiers' camp. Last evening quite a number spoke, in the hearing

of Rev Mr. Gilbert, General Agent of the American Bible Society, and of the Christian Commission, who was surprised and delighted with what he saw and heard. This evening some seventy-five persons arose to manifest their purpose to pray and labor yet more than they have done hitherto, for the continuance and greater power of this work of God, as they believe God has no thought of stopping it, so they have no idea of being weary in this well-doing. O how I do love these brethren of Jesus and rejoice in my labors here. I am in my element. Bless the Lord that I was sent here. Thanks to you for favoring me with this position. Some few incidents may interest you. At a meeting a young man arose and said, "That only two hours before he came to the meeting he used profane language; convicted in this meeting, he gave himself up to God, and seemed to have the peace of pardon." Others said, "that their sins were forgiven at the meeting mentioned." Another soldier said at a meeting: "Last night, after all were in bed and still, I, burdened for sinners, knelt down alone to pray for them—my soul went up in agonizing prayer to God. A sinner came along hearing cries as of those in distress, and first with an oath, asked the cause of a man lying down there. He soon learned. I talked with him about his soul—he dropped on his knees by my side, and with tears, begged me to pray for him, and promised to attend to the salvation of his soul." This beloved brother, Vice-President of the Soldiers' Christian Association, now gone from us, and in a hospital in Baltimore, was an efficient worker, as well as a man of prevalence in prayer; we are sorry to lose such. O how they do regret to

leave Camp Parole. Said a converted backslider, "I do regret to leave this camp and these meetings. Here I was reclaimed. I left home a wicked man, though in early life for three years in the enjoyment of religion, as I then supposed. I have a pious praying wife, and long to see her, and make her glad by the change God has wrought in me; but I am sorry to leave these meetings, and to leave you, Mr. Colton. I remember the pleasant look with which you first accosted me in my quarters. I remember the instructions since received; I am perfectly happy in God now. O how much to be thankful for. How can I leave?" This and more he said, as he took his leave the other night, with tears. He spoke both publicly and to me at the close of the meeting. O, Mr. Griffith, my heart is enlarged; when shall I stop? I have many more like records in my note-book. Enough now; more another time.

Yours in the Lord,

ERASTUS COLTON,

Agent U. S. Christian Commission, Camp Parole.

Army of the Potomac.

The Revival at Camp Distribution.

At this Camp the preaching the blessed Gospel has had, and is having, a gloriously telling effect upon the hearts of the soldiers. I have seen scores, and on one occasion nearly a hundred, rise at once, requesting an interest in the prayers of God's people. Nearly every day souls were born into the kingdom of Jesus. I have seen from fifteen to twenty at a time bowing at our altars and crying for mercy. Nor were they feeble and inaudible cries, but like the publican, "God be merciful to me a sinner," "Lord save me;" thus evincing a degree of earnestness which led us to believe that the work was not superficial, but one that went to the depths of the soul. And what was still more convincing in this regard, I have heard them, after having found the Saviour, testify from their own experience that Christ *had* power on earth to forgive sin.

A Protracted Meeting.

At an experience meeting, a soldier in speaking of the protracted efforts the Commission was putting forth for the salvation of those in arms said, "This is the longest protracted meeting I ever attended in my life. I have been in this camp ten weeks, and I have not missed a single meeting, I wish it would continue always, and it would be my blessed privilege to go from these meetings to a glorious meeting in heaven." Another soldier, one to whom I had the privilege of presenting the truth of

God, and of inviting him to accept of salvation in Jesus Christ while a sinner, said: "One week ago I came into this camp a wild, wicked, hardened sinner. I came into the meeting on Sunday evening, and I was invited forward for prayer, I did not heed the invitation. The next evening I went again, and was again invited. I accepted the invitation, prostrated myself at the altar, and there God for Christ sake forgave me my sins."

Your delegate, in submitting the above statistical statement of his work while in the service of your Commission, has to add his testimony to that delivered by hundreds of others, to the great field for the effecting of temporal and spiritual benefit to the soldier open to the Christian Commission, and to the good which, under God's blessing, its agents have been enabled to achieve. Very noticeable, too, is the welcome given in every tent to the delegate, the respectful and thankful attention with which his ministrations—whether of counsel, warning or reproof—are received; the gratitude evoked by even the smallest office of kindness, and the entire confidence reposed in every one who wears the Commission's badge.

Ears to Hear.

I think I may say that, during a ministry of fourteen years, I have never labored where there was so earnest attention to spiritual truth, and so seemingly earnest a desire to profit by it, as in that City Point hospital.

REV. J. GORDON CARNAHAN.

The Power of the Spirit of God.

While at Camp Distribution my work was devoted wholly to the welfare of the soul. Our meetings there

were attended with great interest. Our chapel, capable of seating about one thousand men, was often filled to the utmost of its capacity. The Spirit of God was present with us, and at the close of the sermon sometimes as many as fifty would rise for prayers. We usually followed the preaching service with a prayer-meeting, inviting the inquiring ones to come forward for religious conversation and prayer. Not unfrequently twenty-five of these brave men would come forward, and in tears acknowledge their sinfulness, while they sought to cast themselves on the mercy of Christ. The power of the Almighty was felt. The gracious Spirit was doing His work.

The Soldiers Praying for us.

Our prayer-meetings were among the most interesting of my life. Such earnestness, and such devotedness, and such strong faith, we seldom see manifested at home. I have never heard such prayers offered for loved ones and for churches at home as these soldiers offer. A husband prays for an absent wife and children; a young lad prays in such child-like faith and confidence for a mother and sisters at home, that you almost feel that you yourself have never prayed at all. These are earnest men.

Prayer with a Soul in it.

They have seen suffering and endured hardship, and mellowed down by the severities of war they speak what they feel. Their language has a soul in it, and it finds a soul in the hearer, unless he has encased it in a cage of steel.

Love to the Brethren.

The apostle says, "by this shall ye know that ye have passed from death unto life, because ye love the brethren," and I have never seen a livelier test of this than a colored soldier gave at the close of one of our evening meetings. There was a simplicity in his expression which touched all our hearts, and he closed his remarks by saying, in a most impressive manner, "I love my Saviour, I love the Church of Christ, I love the world, I love everybody, I love them that don't love me." And he sat down. I felt that that poor son of Africa had reached the climax in Christian experience. Like the martyred Stephen, and his Saviour before him, he loved his enemies, and he could pray for his masters who had despitefully used him.

Swift to Hear.

One of the most gratifying features of the army is the readiness with which they receive religious instruction. The demand for Christian laborers is vastly greater than the supply. The Macedonian cry from the adjacent forts reached our ears, "Come over and help us." And though some of our delegates preached as many as four times on the Sabbath, still we could not satisfy the demand.

Rich Experience for Ministers.

No minister can have a richer experience than the army affords, and none probably can find a field of greater usefulness. The church which sends out its pastor will receive a blessing for it, and if he carries a warm heart, filled with the Spirit of Christ, he may be

the means of a rejoicing in camp which shall cause joy in heaven.

M. L. SEVERANCE,
Boscawen, N. H.

The Revival in the 18th Corps.

Another feature, and to my mind the most important one in results, is the public means of grace. Last Sunday night, upward of fifteen men arose and signified their desire to flee the wrath to come, and be saved from their sins. We held one of the most interesting prayer-meetings last Saturday evening that I ever attended. There was a sweet and heavenly influence resting down upon the assembly, and we could say with Peter, "Lord, it is good for us to be here."

Report of M. S. Wells, Delegate.

Many have been converted in the 18th Army Corps, of late, and are going forth rejoicing in the Lord. And now as the 10th Army Corps has taken the place of the 18th, the same blessed influences continue, and we shall look for the continuation of the same blessed results.

Our distribution of reading matter among the sick wards has a salutary benefit. Men read, and forget their aches and pains, and thus avoid low-spiritedness—they are less discontented. In short, it is a decided sanitary department, for which we have a very comfortable supply as we need them.

I am, Sir, very happy and contented in my work, and hope to render myself both useful to the soldier and the Commission that has committed such a trust to my hands.

But I must close. There is a very healthy state of things in the various departments of the Commission here, and we expect to find the records at last show a glorious harvest of souls for the Redeemer. May the blessing of our Lord Jesus Christ be upon the United States Christian Commission is my humble prayer.

Respectfully yours,

M. S. WELLS.

For Ministers.

I have nothing to report which differs essentially from the many reports which I have read of Delegates of the Christian Commission. The work exceeded in power to interest my whole spiritual nature, any experience of my life. My work commenced the day before I received my commission, at Boston, while on the cars to and from the city, and did not cease until I delivered a soldier boy to his mother, in my town, five minutes before reaching my home. He is on furlough.

The *fulness* of the work is truly wonderful. On every hand, in every hour of the day, travelling or sitting, there is abundant opportunity to bless soldiers; and the fulness of the blessing flows back into one's own heart.

My people were greatly benefitted by my absence; and if they had not been, I think I have been enough better man for going, to make it policy for them to send me again.

Truly yours,

E. DOUGASS,

Bridgewater, Mass.

Special Diet Kitchen Bill of Fare.

Soup—Mutton,	Pudding—Bread,
Beef,	Rice,
Chicken,	Tapioca,
Fish—Cod,	Corn Starch,
Meats,	Farina,
Chickens,	Blanc Mange,
Baked Apples,	Custard—Boiled,
Potatoes—Roast,	Baked,
Bread and Butter,	Fruits,
Corn Bread,	Jellies,
Biscuit,	Jams,
Toast—Dry,	Preserves,
Butter,	Tea,
Milk,	Cocoa,
Eggs—Boiled,	Gruel,
Poached,	Tomatoes.

Blackberry Cordial.

Again as I passed the rounds with the blackberry cordial and heard such expressions as these: "Not any more, Chaplain, your medicine has cured my diarrhoea, I should never have got well without it. God bless the Christian Commission." "O Chaplain, give me some of that medicine, I have heard of it at the front as good for me, by those who have been cured by it," and then the hearty "thank you." I am fully persuaded that this branch of the work is of great value to the men. The cordial is a valuable donation to the stores of the Com-

mission especially during the summer and fall; and receives the strongest commendation from the Surgeon in charge of our hospital and his assistants.

WM. M. ROBINSON.

A Peach.

ANDOVER THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY.

I never dreamed that so much good could be accomplished by such simple means. A basket of peaches would give joy to a hundred wounded men. I shall never forget the case of William C——, a Pennsylvania soldier, who had undergone amputation of the right thigh, and was suffering the utmost intensity of human anguish. He was sinking very rapidly, and had taken no nourishment for several days. When I first saw him, he seemed utterly hopeless of recovery. His wife had been summoned from home; but it was feared that he would die before it was possible for her to reach him. I took a nice peach from my basket; he brightened at the sight of it. I pared it for him, and put it in his mouth, bit by bit; and the look of gratitude which he gave me was ample reward for the whole six weeks' service. Next morning I went to his bedside, and said—"What can I do for you this morning?" With a smile he whispered, "Have you got another peach for me?" And so I repeated the operation of the previous morning. For a whole week he lingered along, with no other nourishment than his morning peach, and the thought that there was some one who cared for him. Meanwhile his wife arrived, and cheered his last hours with words of Christian hope. He fell asleep in Jesus.

"You've Touched my Heart."

Never was such a field presented for Christian labor. All seemed willing, and many anxious, to converse on religious subjects. I did not meet with a single rebuff during the whole term of my service. Often the mere mention of the subject of personal religion would cause deep emotion.

I remember particularly a veteran soldier, whose three years had nearly expired, and who had been terribly wounded in the right knee. He was a Scotchman, and had been a wild and reckless young man. After a cheerful chat of ten or fifteen minutes, I asked him—"Are you a Christian man?" He made no reply at first, but a tear started in each eye, and he was soon weeping and sobbing like a child, covering his face with his hands. At length he said, punctuating his sentences with sobs—"I've been a soldier almost three years, and have never shed a tear before, in all my hardships and sufferings. You might cut me to pieces with knives, and not draw a tear; but you've touched my heart, and I can't help it."

He made me a promise never to drink another drop of liquor, and became from that day a seeker after Jesus.

Yours, respectfully,

FRANK H. SNOW.

Rev. W. E. Boardman.

Colored Schools.

I also held an evening school among the colored young men, teamsters in the Commissary Department. I found great anxiety to learn to read almost universal among

them. If an evening school on a large scale could be opened among them, great good could be accomplished, as there are probably between two and three thousand colored persons at or near City Point.

S. S. SUTTON.

Brighton, Michigan.

The Dying Soldier's Prayer.

The prayers of David, the son of Jesse, were ended with the petition, "Let the whole earth be filled with his glory." The soldiers of David's army are not all dead yet. One went home last week, uttering a similar prayer.

"Corporal Henry C. Smith died at Carver Hospital, July 20, 1864. He belonged to the 8th Michigan Regiment. He had his left arm amputated above the elbow, and was not naturally of the firmest health. He always greeted me with a smile, and spoke earnestly and heartily on religion; said he was willing God's will should be done in him. A few hour's before his death he sent for Chaplain Parkes to come and pray with him. Mr. Parkes conversed with him, and then prayed with him. Then Smith prayed. After offering a petition to God for his own welfare, he prayed for President Lincoln, for the country, and that the cause of crushing the rebellion might be advanced and benefitted by his death."

Yours, &c.

SAMUEL G. HALEY,

East Andover, N. H.

Christian Commission in Arkansas.

Daily Prayer-Meeting.

The rooms of the Christian Commission were opened in Little Rock Arkansas, on the first of February, 1864. A pleasant and commodious place having been procured in a conspicuous part of the city, we unfurled the "banner," and commenced sounding the "Gospel Trumpet." For spiritual growth and Divine guidance in our mission of love, a daily prayer-meeting was immediately appointed as a proper and successful means. And here let me remark, that wherever the Commission has been established, the first act was to dedicate the spot to Almighty God, and earnestly seek his favour and direction. To accomplish proper and desirable results we must use proper and appointed means.

Rooms.

The building we have obtained is a large two-story dwelling-house, situated on the south-west corner of Main and Mulberry streets, which had just been leased to the Western Sanitary Commission, but, through the kindness of its agent, G. W. Wyeth, we were made welcome to one-half of it, and thus united under the same roof the two "Sisters of Charity."

The locality is the best in the city for our business. But the condition of the rooms previous to being occupied by the Commission, was anything but inviting; resembling indeed a secesh boarding-house more than a dwelling for "white folks." But choosing appropriate tools, and "taking off the coat and rolling up the sleeves,"

we began to seek out the boundary lines of the floor, and then to make visible and satisfactory explorations of the walls.

Having obtained some idea of the dimensions of the rooms, we erected two large book-cases for Testaments, "soldiers' books," hymn-books, tracts, &c.; obtained another large black-walnut one for a library, and arranged suitable shelves for religious papers, and literary magazines of miscellaneous reading. Ample accommodations were also made for writing, and two long file-desks put up for the leading secular and religious newspapers.

But the object of the Christian Commission and its actual workings in other Departments, being almost entirely unknown to the greater portion of the army of this Department, it required much perseverance as well as patience, to get established and to procure the respect and encouragement of those with whom we have to do. But with the help of the "Good Master," whose cause it is, we at first secured the favor of the commanding General, and a lively and growing interest soon became manifest. At first, soldiers would come in, rather hesitatingly, to inspect and to inquire the prices of things, and saying among themselves "that they allowed" it to be a sutler's shop or some "shebang" following the army to keep "greenbacks from moulding." But a knowledge of the Commission at once commanded respect, and the growing interest may be seen by the following report.

Work.

Average number that visited the rooms, daily, for the following five months: February, twenty; March, forty-

five; April, ninety; May, one hundred and seventy-five; June, one hundred and forty. Average number that attended the daily prayer-meeting: February, seven; March, twelve; April, eighteen; May, fifty; June, forty-five. Reading matter distributed at this and the other military posts, viz: Fort Smith, Pine Bluff, and Duvall's Bluff, during the first five months: Soldiers' books, 6,786; Testaments, 4,581; hymn-books, 2,713; magazines, 662; library-books, 440; papers, 69,771; pages of tracts, 229,528, the sum total distributed in June, being twelve times that of February. And, besides, we have distributed a large number of Charts, Almanacs, Silent Comforters, Green Pastures, Words of Life, Words for the Heart, &c., to hospitals, and Spelling-books, Bible-readers, copy-books, &c., to colored regiments. We have also issued to hospitals, shirts, sheets, pillow-slips, drawers, handkerchiefs and towels, and have put into the hands of the soldiers, when needy, many luxuries, consisting of dried, pickled and canned fruits, condensed beef, and milk, wines, cordials, jellies, jams, &c., &c. We have, during the time, held one hundred and eighty religious meetings, besides many short services at hospitals, and on funeral occasions; we have furnished stationery for the hospitals, and very many times have set down by the bedside of the sick and wounded, written out their requests and sent them to their dear ones at home; talked with them of Jesus, and, if dying, commended them to Him in prayer, and forwarded the sad news to their families, all of which has brought many a smile as well as tear, and many an earnest "God bless you, and them that sent you."

Asleep in Jesus.

Oh, could you have stood with me, the other morning, by the bedside of that dying soldier, who had sent for me to spend with him his last earthly moments, and heard him say, looking up so affectionately, "O, my brother, will you sing to me that hymn that you sung the other day to my dying comrade, beginning

"Asleep in Jesus, blessed sleep!
From which none ever wake to weep'?"

and then heard those grateful expressions, and seen that dying smile, you would have gone home saying, let us double our diligence. And he is but one of the many who have been comforted and made to rejoice through your Christian sympathy and benevolence. Blessed cause. Let it not suffer at home, and we who are in the field will faithfully watch and labor.

C. C. THAYER, Local Agent.

The Soldier's Motive.

The character of our soldiers is hardly appreciated by our citizens. Ambition, the desire of glory, the restlessness of youth, revenge for injuries received from the barbarous slave powers and their minions, are believed to contribute their share towards the armies of our heroes, no less than a pure, patriotic love of country.

The following letter will dispel this illusion. We lately heard it read at the meeting of the New York Central Branch of the United States Christian Commission, in the presence of the writer's townsmen, in Utica. Every eye was moistened. It was written the day before

the writer received his mortal wound. He now sleeps in Jesus.

FORT BAKER, October 20, 1864.

DEAR LOTTIE—I found a small white envelope among the others that you put into my box before I came away from home, and I knew that Lottie put it there, because she wanted me to write to her. Well, it always does us good to please those that love us; and I am glad to think that my little girl would be pleased to have me write to her. It is a pleasant task for me; and the thought of good, loving children at home, who think of me every day—who for my sake are trying to be good to their mother, and make her happy, is a source of comfort, encouragement, and of consolation, that I cannot describe with my pen, nor tell with my tongue. How far this thought goes, or how much it contributes to reconcile me to the separation that, for their sakes, I have voluntarily endured, you can never realize until like circumstances call forth like feelings; and I earnestly pray that this may never be. I know that you do not now realize that I am here because I love you, and that you do not appreciate the necessity of my being here. But by-and-by, when you grow up, you will understand things better; and when you read in history, of this war, and of its causes and objects, you will be glad that your father left home when you were a little girl, and went forth to contend for the right. You will love me all the more then, and so will all the rest of my children. This is the thought that encourages and consoles me; and then, beside this, the consciousness of none other than good and pure motives—and, above all, the consolation, from

day to day, that religion affords me—all contribute to make me happy, even while the constant longing, lingering anxiety about my home and family, keeps them every moment in my thoughts.

Try and be good, Lottie, if you love me, and want to do what you can to make me happy. Be good to your mother and grandmother, and brothers and sisters. Try to be good to the Lord, and then you will be happy yourself, and everybody will love you; and if I should never see you again on earth, we shall meet in heaven. I pray for you many times every day, and I want you to pray for yourself and me. Try to learn in your books; go to school, and Sunday-school always, when you can. Save this letter until you get old. Tell Harry I will write to him before long; and Freddy, that I mean to send him some pretty stones I have picked up for him. Kiss all the family for me, from grandma to the baby, and love them all. God bless you.

FATHER.

Writing Home.

The gratitude of surviving relatives for the letters and ministrations of the delegates, cannot easily be expressed. From a pile of letters of acknowledgments before us, we take, almost at random, the two following, as illustrations.

ROLLING PRAIRIE, Laporte Co.,

Indiana, Dec. 2d, 1864.

George H. Stuart.

MY DEAR BROTHER—I had charge of the General Field Hospital, Chattanooga, Tennessee. I was sent for in haste to visit a noble young man in Ward D. As

soon as he saw me, he said, "Chaplain, I am going to die, and be lost, unless something is done for me soon," and asked me to talk and pray with him. After the services with him were over, I exhorted the inhabitants of the tent to prepare for the solemn change, before reason was gone. He asked me to return in two hours. I did so; but, O what a change. He met me with a smile. Said he, "Chaplain, it's all right now. I am the Lord's, and he is mine. I am now prepared to go whenever it is the Lord's will; but pray again, and sing for me." I did so, with different feelings than before, and sung

"Sweet rivers of redeeming love
Lie just before my eyes,
Had I the pinions of a dove,
I'd to those rivers rise." &c.

He praised God, though nearly gone. He passed off triumphantly, in about one hour and a half more.

Very truly yours,

JOHN E. NEWHOUSE.

IPSWICH, Mass., July 8, 1864.

Mr. John E. Newhouse,

DEAR SIR—We return to you our sincere thanks for the letter we received from you this morning.

It gives us great comfort to know that the Lord Jesus was with our son during his last hours; that He stood by him, and led him gently through the valley of the shadow of death. A comfort to us, also, while we are mourning our loss so bitterly, that we may meet him on the other side.

For his sake we thank you for speaking with him, for

singing with him; it must have done him so much good. Yes, he was a good boy. We all know it. No mother ever had a son more faithful than he—but this is for our country. God grant we may soon have peace, crowned with victory, which will put an end to these sad tidings that every new day now brings to us.

Yours very respectfully.

NEW GLARCY, June 19, 1864.

Rev. John T. Baird.

DEAR SIR:—It is with the greatest pleasure I acknowledge the receipt of a letter penned by you, for my poor weak and wounded son, but, to express my thanks and gratitude to you for so much kindness, will be impossible. I will, together with my wife, bear in mind to our graves, your angel act towards my boy, and for the few words of consolation administered to myself. I pray God will reward you for so much kindness, and if your family should in the providence of God need an act of humanity, it may be exuberantly bestowed.

I have two sons in the army. Leonard is the oldest, Charles belongs to the 5th Wisconsin Battery. I suppose my poor wounded boy has told you all about that, it will therefore, be needless for me to repeat. I received a letter from him the same day I heard from Leonard through you, and thank God he came out without being hurt. At the time of his penning that letter, he knew nothing of his brother being wounded; he says in his letter, "I seen the 22d Regiment, but did not see Leonard." I presume he knows it, by this time.

I have two good sons, and thank God for the gift. But I read that the Eternal God had an only Son, "a well-beloved Son," whom he delivered up to suffer the greatest indignity possible, and then die the ignominious death of the cross. Jesus' friends all deserted him. Not so with my son, God was with him and sent friends to administer to his wants." Surely these are mercies and should call forth our humble thanks. We repeat the words of the Son of God, and say with our whole heart "Thy will be done," having the promise of God, that all things will work out for good, to them that love Him, and keep his commandments.

I have faith to believe in all God's promises. I also believe that a sparrow cannot fall to the ground without His notice, that the hairs of our head are all numbered, that nothing can escape God's notice. All my hope is in Him concerning this war, and that we will be victorious at last. My unseen, I cannot say unknown, friend, you have been the good Samaritan to my poor boy in his time of need. What has been done for him has been done to me. But I am afraid I am tedious, I could not help it, you will forgive. God's blessing rest upon you and yours, while I remain

Very respectfully yours.

The Army a Fast Place.

There is a large class of the soldiers who have been professors of religion at home, but have lost the lustre of their hope, with the loss of home privileges. Many and many a time I have heard the remark—"I had a hope, but the army is a poor place to brighten it." And

among these men is one of the greatest works of the Commission. It carries personal sympathy to each Christian, and thus brings Christians together in sympathy among themselves. Soldiers rarely sympathize together in their religious feelings, without some one to take the lead; and this is just what the Christian Commission does. And this is the reason why laborers here find more encouragement than at home. Their presence and influence satisfies a want that nothing else reaches; and, too, the progress of Christians is more manifest than at home, where these outside influences are less rare. The army is a *fast* place. Soldiers morally travel the upward road, or the downward road—whichever they may have chosen—much faster than their friends at home. And as vice is spontaneous, while virtue needs culture, the work of the Christian Commission cannot be too widely spread, or too closely followed up. This is the testimony of officers, high and low, who, without exception, treated us with marked respect.

EDWARD P. WILD,
(Of Bangor Seminary) Brookfield, Vt.

Army of the Shenandoah.

The Wounded.

Most of the time of my service acted as agent for the Commission, at Martinsburg, W. Va. Labored among the sick and wounded, as they were brought in from the front. They usually arrived there in the evening, after riding all day over the rough pike, in the common army wagons. We met them at the wagons, assisted in getting

them into the churches used as hospitals, and then supplied them with hot tea or coffee, and food; assisted in dressing their wounds, &c.

As they were kept here but for a short time, until they could be put upon the cars to be sent further east. no good accommodations had been prepared for them—not even arrangements to supply them promptly with rations—and a delegate could feel, as he labored, that he was really doing something to save suffering.

Many of them told us that they thought they could not have lived without our attention. We also assisted in fixing them comfortably on the cars, and either furnishing them with food, or seeing that the Government officers did so. Never have I seen such immediate results from my efforts to do good,

Brooklyn and Long Island.

The Brooklyn and Long Island Christian Commission was organized in March, 1864. Our object is to interest all the Christian Churches and people of Brooklyn and Long Island in the most efficient coöperation practicable, with the United States Christian Commission and other Christian organizations, in supplying religious teachers and helpers, and religious and moral training to the army and navy, and to any others whom the events of the war may commit to our ministry.

Six Months' Work.

Our first six months' work includes the sending to the front over a hundred delegates, who have carried con-

solation and instruction to thousands in the camp. They have taken up the wounded from the battle-field—dressed their wounds, given them drink and nourishment—spoken to them words of cheer, prayed with them, and directed them to the cross of Christ. They have sat down on the ground, and taken from their dying lips their last messages to transmit to their homes—have closed their eyes, and committed them, with prayers, to their last resting-place. No father or brother could have done more for them. The delegates have also held meetings for prayer and exhortation; and hundreds, we have reason to think, have been converted. The report of the good done can never be made out until the Judgment-day. Thousands of books, including Bibles, Testaments, and other valuable religious works, have been distributed. They have been most gratefully received, and, we doubt not, profitably perused.

Navy Work.

Having in charge the Brooklyn Navy Yard, where most of our Government Ships come and go—thus affording a vast field for Christian labor—we have distributed a large amount of reading matter, including volumes of great interest, to from thirty to fifty thousand seamen and officers.

Our Constituency and Co-workers.

Every church should bear a part in this blessed work. Their prayers and contributions are needed. Every Sunday-school also might do the same. Already many of them have entered upon the work. In the success of this great struggle, who are so much interested as our

children and youth? Let them show their interest in efforts to comfort and bless those who are sacrificing their lives to preserve to them the noblest inheritance of Earth.

Our Wants.

We need Delegates. Men of the right stamp; the working men of our churches; full of zeal; with tact and good common sense; ready to embark for six weeks, or more, in this most blessed but self denying work. They should come recommended by their pastors.

We need Funds: not only to use directly in our work, but to help forward the great cause, which the Central Commission at Philadelphia are prosecuting. Think of half a million of men in our Army and Navy, to be supplied with Christian influences! How large an outlay it must require!

We need Comfort-Bags and Housewives. These, in one sense, are a means of grace. They open the way to the heart's sympathies, and are a blessed preface to a higher ministration.

We need books: *Religious* books, of course; but others also: all kinds that are instructive, entertaining, and useful; such as History, Biography, Travels, and Tale of good moral tendency; in fact, just such kind of books as intelligent families are accustomed to place in their libraries. Illustrated papers and magazines, both weekly and monthly, are very much needed.

We need the prayers of Christians. In vain we labor to build the house, except God build it. That he will, in answer to prayer, we have no doubt. And hence we

ask the prayers of the good, that "our labor may not be in vain in the Lord."

The Cincinnati Branch.

Business of the Year.

At a meeting of the Cincinnati Branch of the U. S. Christian Commission, held on Tuesday evening at the residence of A. E. Chamberlain, Esq., Chairman, a report was presented showing the business of the last year, of which the following is a summary:

Cash received	\$48,044 23
Total expenditures	42,673 62
Stores donated and purchased	170,000 00

SOLDIERS' READING.

Copies of Scriptures distributed	56,697
Soldiers' hymn-books	77,204
Knapsack books	451,747
Library books	21,260
Magazines and pamphlets	9,869
Religious papers	1,145,674
Secular papers	46,800
Pages of tracts	1,571,921
Reams of paper	1,633
Envelopes	289,375

The total business of the year amounts to over two hundred thousand dollars. To disburse this large amount has cost the Commission about one per cent. of the receipts, which is certainly a very economical management. The railroads have carried the delegates and

much of the freight free; the express and telegraph companies have also made very large contributions; thus enabling the Commission to devote its entire means almost to the soldiers. The Burnet House has entertained delegates free of charge from the commencement of the war—a very large contribution. The funds of the Commission are now low, and an earnest appeal is made to the public for help.

Colorado.

Novel Contributions.

Mr. E. W. Sinclair, of Central City, *Colorado* Territory, sends scrip of Wyandott Lode, No. 4, value for \$500; and by the same mail we receive from Messrs. Hucks & Lambert, of San Francisco, an invoice of a hundred barrels of Axle Grease to lubricate the machinery of the Christian Commission.

THE THANKSGIVING COLLECTION.

Many churches have no service on thanksgiving; and some have time-honored local charities, which they could not well neglect. Will such congregations kindly remember our brave suffering soldiers and sailors, on the Sabbath after receiving this tract, and send their collections at once to the nearest branch of the Commission? See list on page 2 of cover.

INFORMATION AND INSTRUCTION ABOUT SUPPLIES.

ALL good and suitable stores are welcomed, and all necessary freight and charges paid on them by the Commission, and are distributed by delegates of the Christian Commission personally.

WHAT TO SEND.—**MONEY**, by all means, if possible. We need funds to pay the expenses of our delegates and laborers in the field; for the purchase of books, tracts, papers, and for the purchase of delicacies and comforts *not* sent by your loving hearts, which are very necessary for distribution in the hospitals.

The Special Diet Kitchens, connected with the largest hospitals, now in successful operation, where delicacies and wholesome dishes are prepared for the sick soldier, with the same care and skill as at home, by the ladies employed in the Diet Kitchens by the Christian Commission, involve a large increase of labor and outlay of stores and funds. We appeal to the friends of the soldier at home, to meet this great, but necessary expense.

Cotton Shirts, Cotton Drawers, Canton Flannel Shirts and Drawers, Surgical Shirts and Drawers. (with tape strings to tie, instead of seams at the sides,) Large Cotton Drawers. (to wear in-doors as pants.) Dressing-Gowns, Shippers, (if of cloth or carpet, with thick soles,) Sheets, Pillow-cases, Bed-ticks, (sing e, for filling with straw,) Pillows, Pads for fractured limbs, Ring-paws for wounds, Fans, Netting to protect from flies, Housewives stored with needles, thread, buttons, pins, &c., Handkerchiefs, Wash-rags, Old Linen.

Oat-meal, Farina, Corn-starch, Dried Rusk, Jellies, Soda Biscuit, Butter Crackers, Boston Crackers, Pickles, Jams, Onions in barrels, Apples in barrels, Cranberries, Dried Fruits. Eggs are always needed. They should be carefully packed in boxes large enough to hold about 100 dozen, made with handles projecting from each end, made strong and packed **FULL**, well shaken down as they are packed, and sent by express. Good Black Tea, Chocolate, Lemons, Syrups. All preparations of the blackberry are of double value.

Good Brandy, Madeira Wine, Port Wine, Cordials. Domestic wines are excellent in winter, apt to spoil in summer.

STATIONERY IS MUCH NEEDED, paper, envelopes and pencils. Send the best Books, Magazines, Periodicals, Pictorials, and late newspapers.

HOW TO PACK.—Pack in boxes. Barrels are not as good. Secure well. Boxes should not be so large that two cannot conveniently lift them into a wagon. Pack eatables by themselves. Never pack perishable articles, such as oranges, lemons, bread, cakes, nor jars of jellies and jams, with other goods. Bottles and Jars should, when possible, be packed in boxes by themselves, well filled with saw-dust or straw. Never pack Clothing, or Dried Fruits and Berries, with goods that are liable to break and spill. Tin cans should be soldered; all other modes fail. Stone jars should be corked and firmly bound with oiled linen or leather over the cork, and packed closely in saw-dust or hay, in boxes, never exceeding a dozen and a half in a box, and nailed strongly, to bear rough handling. Jellies in tumblers, covered with paper, and wines, cordials, &c., in bottles, with paper or other poor stoppers, are liable to spill out, and if packed with other things, sure to injure them.

HOW TO MARK.—Mark in plain letters and figures, with paint or ink on the boards—cards rub off. On one corner, the number of the box, according to the number sent by you in all, numbering your first box #1, your second #2, your third #3, and so on from the first sent to the last. On another corner, mark each box, as from your Society, giving the name, and HAVE IT CONSPICUOUSLY ADDRESSED TO THE MOST CONVENIENT BRANCH OF THE U. S. CHRISTIAN COMMISSION, AS DIRECTED ON THE NEXT PAGE.

To secure acknowledgments, and to save trouble, also send an invoice or list by mail, on paper, the common letter sheet size, written only on one side, specifying each barrel or box by number, and giving the contents of each by itself. Give your own name and Post-office in full, with the name of your State. Place also another list or invoice of the same kind in the box, under the lid.



RHODE

United States Christian Commission.

The Rhode Island Committee of the United States Christian Commission earnestly commends to the pastors and congregations of the State the appeal of the Christian Commission, and most respectfully suggests that it be read in all the churches on the Sabbath next preceding Thanksgiving Day, and that the people be invited to make a liberal thank-offering, on that day, for this noble object.

If in any churches the proposed collection should interfere with the customary Thanksgiving collection for the poor, the pastor might, at his discretion, take up a collection for this cause on some succeeding Sabbath.

WM. J. KING,
W. W. HOPPIN,
J. C. KNIGHT,
J. KINGSBURY,
J. W. VERNON,

COMMITTEE.